



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

of the sentiments in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each sentiment at length and as fully as it had been expressed before in any suitable words that should occur to me. Then I compared my *Spectator* with an original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual search for words of the same import, but of different lengths to suit the measure, or of different sounds for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales in the *Spectator*, and turned them into verse; and after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collection of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the subject. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of the thoughts. By comparing my work with the original, I discovered many faults and corrected them; but I sometimes had the pleasure to fancy that in particulars of small consequence I had been fortunate enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think that I might in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious.

LANE COOPER

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

BALLAD-WRITING IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Whatever may be the fitness or the unfitness of the "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" as a textbook for pupils in the second year of the high school, it has for several years past been the stimulus for some of the most interesting themes my second-year classes have produced and—more than that—for the themes which have called forth the most interested effort on the part of the pupils. Our outline for work in English specifies the novel and ballad as literary types in this year; so, before taking up the "Rime," I spend two or three periods in preparation for it. I give a five- or ten-minute talk on the two theories of ballad-making, with more stress on the communal theory, since I try to call up scenes in which such composition might have taken place. Then, having read to the class several of the old ballads, I get from them some of the most striking characteristics, such as abrupt beginning, use of repetition and internal rhyme, changes from one speaker to another or from discourse to narrative made without warning, frequent breaks in the narrative. Then comes an assignment for outside reading of several modern ballads, or ballads in surface characteristics only. These are always the shorter

ballads, so that the pupils can give the story of each as an oral theme, besides reporting what ballad characteristics they have noticed.

When we have nearly finished our study of the "Ancient Mariner," I tell the class I want them to try to write a ballad based on a Bible story, and assign definite passages from which they may choose; as, for example, Gen. 22:1-14; Dan., chap. 6, or 5, or 3; I Sam., chap. 17; Ruth, chap. 1. The only directions given are: "Get to the point as quickly as may be; if possible, write no more than seven stanzas." This work is done outside of class, and a week is allowed for it. On the appointed day the themes are collected. Then I suggest that we imagine ourselves a group of primitive people, and see how good a ballad we can make. The class chooses one of the assigned Bible stories, and as lines are suggested by individuals, they are written on the board. Changes are permitted in expression, or in selection of points to be mentioned; and, considering that not over forty minutes are spent on this work, the result is not bad. At the close of the period, any member of the class who wishes—and most of them do wish it—may take back the theme just handed in, and revise it before returning it the next day.

Following are some of these themes, the first a class composition, the others written by individuals.

I. DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

When Daniel had been made the chief
Of all the country round,
The princes of him jealous were,
And all upon him frowned.

They sought the king and made him sign
A new and harsh decree:
Whoso to God or man should pray,
He punished then should be.

Now Daniel was a pious man,
Who thrice a day did pray;
He heeded not the king's decree,
Nor did he change his way.

Then to the king the nobles went,
And what was seen they told;
The king with grief was overwrought,
But to his word must hold.

Then Daniel in the den was thrown;
The king all night did fast,
And to the den next morning went,
Where Daniel had been cast.

"Has thy God, whom thou always served,
Preserved thy life this night?"

"My God has shut the lions' mouths,
And saved me by His might."

Then was the king exceeding glad
That Daniel he did win.
He lifted him from out the cave,
And threw the nobles in.

II. THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Belshazzar with his royal guests
Sat in his stately hall,
When suddenly appeared to them
Man's fingers on the wall.

Belshazzar's countenance was changed,
And troubled was his mind.
He called before him wise men all,
Interpreters to find.

"Whoso interprets these strange words
Shall have a golden chain
And scarlet robe; and he shall be
The third o'er this domain."

Chaldeans and astrologers,
Soothsayers, wise men all,
In vain they tried to read the words
That were upon the wall.

"There is a man in thy kingdom,"
Then up and spake the queen,
"Who has strange pow'rs, and can explain
The words that here are seen."

"O King Belshazzar," Daniel speaks,
As from the wall he reads,
"Thy kingdom shall divided be
'Mongst Persians and the Medes."

They clothed him in a scarlet robe,
And hung a golden chain
About his neck; but that same night
Belshazzar he was slain.

III. DAVID AND GOLIATH

It was the huge Goliath,
And wondrous loud called he,
"Is there any man from yonder camp
Who dares to fight with me?"

"If I, perchance, should slay the man
Who comes to fight with me,
The glory shall be for my king
And for mine own countree.

"But if, again, my luck should turn,
And he instead slay me,
The glory shall be for his king
And for his own countree."

It was a youth, a beardless youth,
Who stepped from Israel's throng,
"I come," said he, "to fight this man,
And right my people's wrong."

This youth was David, Jesse's son,
Who took his leather sling,
And in it put a rounded stone,
At the giant great to fling.

The stone it flew both swift and true
And cut Goliath's head;
The monster fell upon the ground,
And soon he was quite dead.

And David, who had killed this man,
And set his people free,
In after-years was Israel's king,
And he reigned gloriously.

IV. HOW ESTHER WAS MADE QUEEN

The king sat in his banquet hall,
With his lords of great renown;
They drank and feasted merrily,
Arrayed in gorgeous gown.

While they were in this festive state,
The queen they asked to see.
The king then to his pages said,
"Fetch Vashti here to me."

"What! this to me?" the queen did cry,
 As this news reached her ear,
 "I, who was born and bred so high,
 Before these men appear?"

"Tell the king I will not come,
 Nor his vile bidding heed."
 That she should then be banished far
 Was by the king decreed.

And now all maids to Shushan came,
 That their beauty might be seen;
 And she who pleased the king the best
 Was to become his queen.

With these came Esther, a Jewish^m maid,
 Whose unadornèd grace
 At once found favor with the king,
 And he gave her Vashti's place.

There are often in these attempts at ballads instances of lines and even stanzas which are unintentionally amusing, and there are errors in punctuation; but on the whole they are more correctly written than the average theme, and they usually show that the writer has caught the spirit of the story told as well as the tone of the ballad.

AUGUSTA F. DITTY

WESTERN HIGH SCHOOL
 BALTIMORE, MD.

THE DIFFERENCE

What difference is there between the classes of the high school in their English work? I had formerly maintained that there was a difference, but what I did not know. From a technical standpoint I desired to learn wherein the Senior differed from the Freshman. The best each could write or produce would be the criterion. A contest was instituted between the classes and various advertising devices were employed to keep the interest. The subject selected was one on which there was practically no available material for outside help and one which every member of the school was equally acquainted with—"Handkerchiefs." Every member of the English classes save one responded.

Each theme was very critically examined, every word counted, and every sentence tabulated. The variation noted is a negligible quantity. In other words, the Senior had made no change in English form during his course—in many cases had retrograded. He might have more